GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:285
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2016
Public Distribution System
Agrawal Shri Rajendra;Birla Shri Om

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of distribution of poor quality foodgrains under the Public Distribution System (PDS) and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
(b) whether the Government has prescribed any standards quality of foodgrains to be distributed under PDS and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;
(c) the nature of various irregularities/corruption/malpractices noticed in the implementation of PDS and the corrective steps taken/proposed to plug the same; and
(d) whether the Government proposes to involve private companies in the supply chain management in PDS and if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)
(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO 285 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 06.12.2016 IN THE LOK SABHA
(a) & (b): Government has prescribed quality norms for foodgrains (wheat & rice) to be distributed under the Public Distribution System (PDS) which are given at Annex I.
In order to ensure that only good quality foodgrains are issued from FCI godowns to the State Governments for distribution under PDS, standing instructions have been issued, as given in Annex II.
However, some complaints regarding distribution of poor quality foodgrains under PDS have been received. The details of these complaints and action taken during 2015-16 are at Annex III.
(c): There have been complaints from individuals and organizations as well as in press reports relating to implementation of the PDS. These pertain to untimely supply of foodgrains, diversion of foodgrains, inclusion/exclusion errors, bogus/ineligible ration cards being in circulation, theft of foodgrains, irregular functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPS), beneficiaries not getting their entitled quota of foodgrains and allotment of FPSs in an arbitrary manner, etc. Under the National Food Security [NFS] Act, 2013 and Targeted Public Distribution System[TPDS] (Control) Orders, responsibility of addressing these issues falls under the purview of respective State/UT Governments. Therefore, as and when shortcomings/complaints are received by this Department, these are referred to the State/UT Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action.
(d): Government is implementing 'End-to-end Computerization of TPDS Operations' under 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) on cost sharing basis with the States/UTs. Component-I of the Scheme comprises activities, namely, digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other databases, computerization of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanisms. Computerization of Supply Chain Management has been taken up with the aim of timely availability of food grains to intended beneficiaries at Fair Price Shop (FPS) and check leakages/diversion of food grains etc. National Informatics Centre (NIC) is the technical partner under the scheme. The States/UTs have the option to either undertake the implementation of the scheme themselves, or through NIC or hire System Integrators (SIs) for rolling out the technology solution at State level Any other aspects of supply chain management in PDS other than computerization are dealt by the respective State/UTs at their own level.
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ANNEX-I
ANNEX REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a)& (b) OF STARRED QUESTION NO 285 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06TH DECEMBER, 2016 IN LOK SABHA.
Quality norms of foodgrains (wheat & rice) prescribed for distribution under the Public Distribution System (PDS)
Wheat: wheat is categorized based upon the percentage of weevilled grains as shown in the table below:-
Category
Percentage of Weevilled grains
A.
Upto 1%
B.
Above 1% and upto 4%
C.
Above 4% and upto 7%
D.
Above 7% and upto 10%
Stock of A and B categories conforming to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) standards and free from insect infestation are prescribed for issue under PDS.
Rice: Rice is categorised on the basis of percentage of damaged and discoloured grains as shown in the table below:-

CATEGORY 'A' DAMAGED GRAIN DISCOLOURED GRAIN
Raw rice Upto 3% Upto 3%
Parboiled rice Upto 3% Upto 3%
CATEGORY 'B'
Raw Rice above 3% upto 4% above 3% upto 5%
Parboiled Rice above 3% upto 4% above 3% upto 5%
CATEGORY 'C'
Raw Rice above 4% upto 5% above 5% upto 7%
Parboiled Rice above 4% upto 5% above 5% upto 7%
CATEGORY 'D'
Lot showing appreciable quantity of loose bran (more than 0.5%) or giving unpleasant smell in respect of raw and parboiled rice.
Stock of A, B & C categories conforming to FSSAI standards and free from insect infestation are prescribed for issue under the PDS and other Welfare Schemes of the Govt. of India, provided the refractions are only upto 20% in excess of the Uniform Specifications of the relevant marketing season in respect of broken grains, chalky grains, red grains, dehusked grains and the incidence of foreign matter does not exceed 1% including rice bran. Inorganic foreign matter should not exceed 0. 5%.
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Annex-II
ANNEX REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a)& (b) OF STARRED QUESTION NO 285 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06TH DECEMBER, 2016 IN LOK SABHA.
INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO STATE GOVERNMENTS/ UTs AND FCI TO ENSURE SUPPLY OF GOOD QUALITY FOODGRAINS UNDER PDS
(i) Only good quality foodgrains free from insect infestation and conforming to Food Safety Standards are to be issued under PDS.
(ii) Ample opportunities are to be provided to the State Government to check the quality of foodgrains prior lifting the foodgrains stocks from FCI godowns.
(iii) Samples of foodgrains are to be collected and sealed from the stocks of foodgrains to be issued under the PDS jointly by FCI and State Governments/UT Administrations.
(iv) An officer not below the rank of Inspector is to be deputed from State Government to take the delivery of foodgrain stocks from FCI godowns.
(v) Regular inspection to check the quality of foodgrains is to be carried out by the officers of State Government.
(vi) It is the responsibility of the concerned State Governments/UT Administrations to ensure that during transportation and storage at different stages in the distribution chain, the foodgrains retain the required quality specifications.
(vii) The State Government, where the decentralized procurement is in operation, should ensure that the quality of foodgrains issued under PDS and other welfare schemes should meet the desired standards prescribed by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
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Annex-III
ANNEX REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a)& (b) OF STARRED QUESTION NO 285 TO BE ANSWERED ON 06TH DECEMBER, 2016 IN LOK SABHA.
STATE-WISE DETAILS OF THE COMPLAINTS REGARDING DISTRIBUTION OF POOR QUALITY FOODGRAINS UNDER THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (PDS) AND ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT DURING THE YEAR 2015-16

State	Complaint	Action Taken by the Government
NCT, Delhi	A complaint was received from Indraprastha Welfare Association, New Delhi regarding Supply of poor quality of foodgrain in Moti Nagar, Area of Delhi	The complaint was got investigated by deputing an officer of the Ministry. The complaint was not found to be true.
Maharashtra	A complaint received from Secretary, Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department, Govt. of Maharashtra - regarding supply of luster loss wheat from FCI base depot, Jalgoan and MSWC, Nanded.	Instructions were issued to all State Governments to accept the luster loss wheat procured during RMS 2015-16 under the relaxed specifications as luster lost wheat is as nutritious as sound wheat only shining is less and the quality of wheat is intact and good.
Jammu & Kashmir	A complaint was received from Director of Consumer affair & P.D. Deptt, Kashmir-regarding Supply of below standard quality wheat under Wheat Relaxation Scheme.	-do-
Kerala	A complaint was received from Kerala Ration Wholesale Distributor Federation, Kottayam in FCI regarding five bags of damaged rice from FSD Valianthura to PDS.	The complaint was got investigated by Area Manager Thiruvanathapuram and found that stock were lifted by State Government nominee after proper acknowledgement about their satisfaction on quality.

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